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Nebraska farm tenancy

Lincoln

1923

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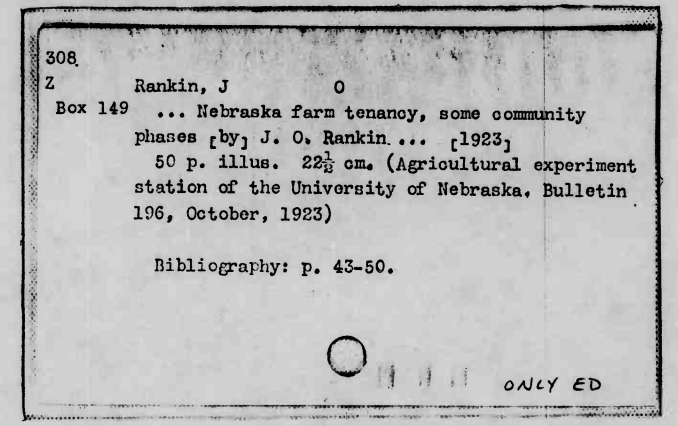

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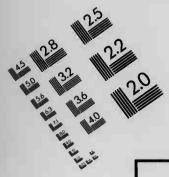

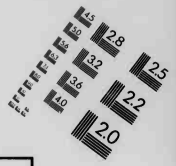

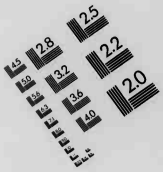

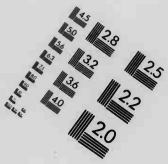

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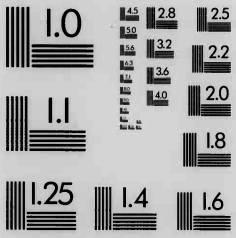

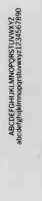

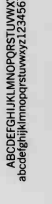

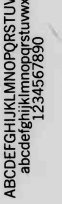

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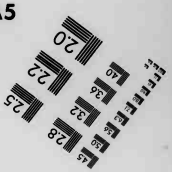

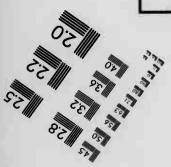

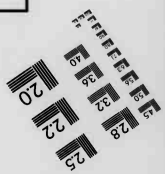

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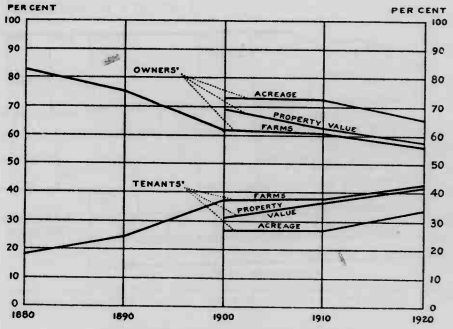
Bulletin 196 October, 1923

Nebraska Farm Tenancy

SOME COMMUNITY PHASES

J. O. RANKIN



THE GROWTH OF NEBRASKA TENANCY

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AND UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE COOPERATING

SUMMARY BY LINES

Tenure was studied on about 1140 farms in ten areas. Pages 3-5.

Nebraska farm tenancy is growing rapidly when measured by acreages, farm values, or numbers of farms. Pages 5-8.

Twice as many of the owners as of the tenants studied are foreign-born. Pages 8 and 9.

Operators of all tenures average about four miles from the main community. Pages 9-11.

The nearest hospital is more than seventeen miles from the average farm home studied. Page 11.

Church and Sunday School are less than four miles away. Pages 11-13.

The common school averages a mile and a half away, but is much farther in many cases. Page 13.

Two-fifths of the farms studied were not rented at all during the decade. Page 15.

Tenants shift from farm to farm about twice as often as owners, but a little less than twice as often as part-owners. Pages 16 and 17.

A third of the farmers of all tenures have been on the same farms for more than ten years. Pages 18 and 19.

In eastern Nebraska three times as many farmers came to their present farms from within the community as from other communities. Pages 19-21.

Three-fourths have free mail delivery. Pages 22 and 23.

Automobiles and telephones are each found on about four farms out of every five studied, or about the average for rural United States. Pages 22-25.

Owners and tenants are substantially the same distance from highways, main roads, and nearest neighbors, but tenants exchange visits with neighbors more frequently than owners. Pages 24-26.

Church and Sunday School are reaching more farm people of all tenure groups than any other organization, except in the Milligan area. Church attendance is reported by more than three-fifths of the men and two-thirds of the women, and by half of the children. Pages 26-30.

About two-fifths of the men are members of farmers' organizations and a slightly smaller proportion are members of lodges, while more than one-fifth of the women are members of women's societies and a little less than a fifth of them are members of lodges. Pages 26-30.

Only 74 offices were held by the 1141 farmers studied—almost half in farmers' organizations. Pages 30 and 31.

Only about a sixth of all farmers report playing outdoor games, but three-fourths of the part-owners, three-fifths of the owners, and less than half of the tenants have equipment for indoor games. Pages 32-37.

Musical instruments of some kind are found in nearly three homes out of four. Pages 32-37.

Fairs, picnics, parties, celebrations, games, moving pictures, dances, chautauquas, automobile trips, and railway travel were the away-from-home amusements most frequently named—listed in the order of frequency of mention. Pages 37-43.

What else to read on these subjects. Pages 43-50.

Nebraska Farm Tenancy

SOME COMMUNITY PHASES

J. O. RANKIN[1]

Scope and location.—Farm tenancy and its effects are of interest and importance from both economic and sociological standpoints. This study will restrict itself largely to the community phases of land tenure as indicated by a study of 1141 Nebraska farms in ten areas whose locations are indicated in Figure 1.

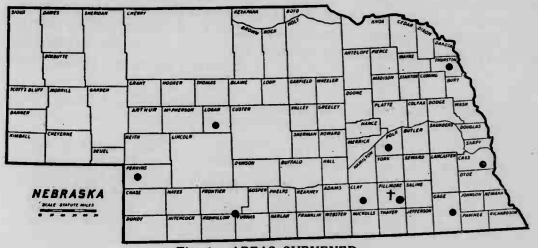


Fig. 1.—AREAS SURVEYED

Between 100 and 125 farms were studied per area except in Logan County. The cross indicates the survey made in cooperation with the Interchurch World Movement.

Tenure distribution.—Table 1 shows the number of owner, part-owner, and tenant farms studied in each of the areas except the Geneva area where the part-owner

[1]Based mainly on the results of a survey conducted in cooperation with Drs. C. J. Galpin and L. C. Gray of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture. Similar but not strictly comparable data are available from about a hundred farms surveyed in cooperation with the Interchurch World Movement but not included in most of the tables. Data from the sand-hill area are also omitted from most of the tables, leaving 982 farms as the usual number included in the tables. Acknowledgments are due various members of the University of Nebraska faculty for counsel and suggestions and to one or two field men in each of the areas for securing schedules and pictures. The pictures were in part taken for the survey and in part secured from the stocks of various local amateur and professional photographers. To the Agricultural Editor is due credit for such matters as typography, make-up, and some of the mechanics of literary style.

Earlier bulletins published on the basis of this survey are:

Reading Matter in Nebraska Farm Homes: Univ. of Nebr. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 180, 1922. pp. 27. figs. 8. Lincoln. Out of print.

The Nebraska Farm Family: Some Land Tenure Phases. Univ. of Nebr. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 185. 1923. pp. 31. figs. 8. Lincoln.

Nebraska Farm Homes: A Comparison of Some Living Conditions of Owners, Part-owners, and Tenants. Univ. of Nebr. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 191. 1923. pp. 48 figs. 19. Lincoln.

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farms were included with owner-operated farms. This information is given to help in the interpretation of later tables, not to indicate the true distribution of Nebraska farmers among the various tenure groups—owners, part-owners, share-cash tenants, share tenants, cash tenants, and managers. The United States Census figures in Table 2 give the land tenure groups for the entire state for 1920.

TABLE 1.—*Owners, part-owners, and tenants studied*[1]

Town in area	County	All operators	Owners	Part-owners	Tenants				Managers
					All	Share-cash	Share	Cash	
Total		1,141	412	159	561	319	178	64	9
Nehawka	Cass	121	46	10	62	32	26	4	3
Filley	Gage	126	44	14	68	54	11	3	0
Milligan	Fillmore	125	59	14	52	37	14	1	0
Geneva[2]	Fillmore	107	41	...	66	43	11	12	0
Fairfield	Clay	110	31	16	63	45	16	2	0
Stromsburg	Polk	125	48	18	58	41	14	3	1
Walthill	Thurston	127	26	30	69	26	11	32	2
Cambridge	Furnas	125	64	7	51	32	15	4	3
Grant	Perkins	129	27	47	49	8	39	2	0
Stapleton	Logan	52	26	3	23	1	21	1	0

[1]The census definition of each of these terms is followed. The term part-owner therefore includes the man who owns part of the land he operates and rents part of it from someone else. This definition has no reference to the mortgaged or unmortgaged condition of the operator's land. An owner whose land is mortgaged is regarded as a full owner, not a part-owner. The share tenant pays a fixed fraction of his crop as rent, the cash tenant a fixed amount of money or other commodity, and the share-cash tenant pays a share of the crops raised for part of the land and cash for the remainder—usually hay and pasture land but sometimes for the farmstead also.

[2]Part-owners not separately reported in the Geneva area.

The purpose of the survey upon which Table 1 is based was not to duplicate the work of the census shown in Table 2 but to compare the economic and social well-being of owners and tenants. For this purpose the enumerators were asked to get as nearly as possible equal numbers of owner and tenant records. As no such selective influence was exercised looking toward securing reports from the farms of equal numbers of cash, share, and share-cash tenants, Table 1 should give a reasonably accurate indication of the distribution of tenants among these three tenant groups in the localities studied.

The most striking tenure distribution peculiarities shown by individual areas in Table 1 are those for the Walthill and Grant areas in Thurston and Perkins Counties, at opposite corners of the state. The Walthill area has an unusually high percentage of part-owners and cash tenants because of the presence of Indian lands. This land is

in many instances largely or wholly unimproved. This makes it necessary that the tenant who operates it own some adjacent land upon which to establish his farmstead and perhaps conduct part of his farming operations. This of course classed him as a part-owner instead of a cash tenant.

In the Grant area in Perkins County more than a third of the farms studied were those of part-owners and almost a third were those of share tenants. In interpreting later tables it must be kept in mind that this area furnished 47 of the 159 part-owners and 39 of the 178 share tenants found in the eight principal areas. Characteristics noted in connection with the data for part-owners and share tenants, as indicated by the averages, are therefore much more strongly affected by high plains conditions than those of the other tenures studied.

TABLE 2.—*Tenancy and ownership in Nebraska: 1880-1920*[1]

Year	Farms	Total per cent	Owners[2]		Tenants		Managers	
			Farms	Per cent	Farms	Per cent	Farms	Per cent
1920	124,417	100	69,672	56.0	53,430	42.9	1,315	1.1
1910	129,678	100	79,250	61.1	49,441	38.1	987	0.8
1900	121,525	100	75,583	62.2	44,810	36.9	1,132	0.9
1890	113,608	100	85,525	75.3	28,083	24.7	....	..
1880	63,387	100	51,963	81.9	11,424	18.1	....	..

[1]Agriculture: Reports by States. Volume VII, 19 ff. Thirteenth Census, 1910. Washington.
Agriculture: Reports for States. Volume VI, Part VI, Part 1. 35 ff. Fourteenth Census, 1920. Washington.

[2]Part-owners are not included here.

GROWTH OF TENANCY IN NEBRASKA: 1880-1920

How measured.—Tenancy may be said to grow as it extends to increasing percentages of all (1) farms, (2) acreage of farm lands, (3) value of farm lands, or (4) value of all farm property. The last three of these deal only with the increases in percentage of property affected, while the first deals with number of men and properties but the properties may be unequal in size and value. As measured by all these methods, Nebraska farm tenancy is growing rapidly.

Number of farms: 1880-1920.—We can compare owner and tenant farms in number quite satisfactorily for the last forty years, since 1880, but in acreage and value only since 1900. Table 2 indicates that in 1880 less than one Nebraska farm in five, and in 1920 more than two out of

every five, were operated by tenants and that the increase in number is now much less rapid than formerly. Two and a third times as great a percentage of Nebraska farms are now operated by tenants as forty years ago. In 1890 the number of tenants was about two and one-half times as great as in 1880 and the percentage which they constituted of the total number of farms in Nebraska was about one and one-third times as great. By 1900 the percentage had

TABLE 3.—*Growth of tenancy in percentage of farms, acreage, and values: 1900–1920*[1]

	United States			West North Central States			Nebraska		
	1920	1910	1900	1920	1910	1900	1920	1910	1900
Farms	38.1	37.0	35.3	34.2	30.9	29.6	42.9	38.1	36.9
Acreage									
Total	27.7	25.8	23.3	32.0	27.0	23.6	33.9	27.3	27.1
Improved	34.9	32.7	30.2	35.8	30.6	27.0	41.1	34.3	32.9
Value									
Land and buildings	35.9	31.5	28.6	38.7	32.7	27.7	42.7	38.6	33.0
All farm property	34.9	30.8	27.5	38.0	31.9	26.7	42.0	37.5	31.1

[1]Agriculture: General Report and Analysis. Volume V, 129 ff. Fourteenth Census. 1910. Washington.
Agriculture: Reports for States. Volume VI, Part 1. 19 ff. Fourteenth Census. 1920. Washington.

again increased very greatly, this time being one and one-half times as great as at the beginning of the decade altho the total number of tenants was distinctly more than one and a half times as great. Between 1900 and 1910, however, the increase in percentage was very slight, but during the last decade tenants have shown a distinct increase in absolute numbers and percentage, altho owners have increased in numbers.

In 1880 and 1890 these Nebraska tenancy percentages were below the average for the United States. In 1900 and 1910 they were a point or two in advance of those of the country considered as a whole, but by 1920 that lead had been lengthened to nearly five points or 42.9 per cent tenancy for Nebraska as compared with 38 for the United States as a whole.[1]

Nebraska has also risen in tenancy percentage more rapidly than the group of West North Central states considered as a whole. Nebraska is one of this group of states. Three southern groups of states have risen to higher percentages of so-called tenancy than Nebraska, but the north

[1]Agriculture: General Report and Analysis. Volume V. 122 ff. Thirteenth Census. 1910. Washington.

generally has not done so. There was little or no tenancy in the western Nebraska counties in 1880, but in some of the eastern Nebraska counties from twenty to forty per cent of the farms were even then operated by tenants.[1] Even the western counties, however, have made such rapid in-

Fig. 2.—THE REPUBLICAN VALLEY HOSPITAL: CAMBRIDGE

Hospital facilities within reasonable distance of farm homes aid in life-saving and comfort for those who are seriously ill.

crease that they are rapidly overtaking those of the eastern part of the state in tenancy percentages, altho in 1880 a considerable part of western Nebraska farm lands had not yet been homesteaded.

Acreages and values.—In 1900 for the first time we obtained some data on the acreages and values of tenant farms as compared with those operated by owners. For the United States as a whole, one writer says, "There is danger that the country may be lulled to indifference by reports that the rate of increase of farm tenancy in the United States is rapidly diminishing. It is true that the number of tenant farms per thousand grew from 353 in 1900 to 370 in 1910, an increase of five per cent, whereas from 1910 to 1920 it grew from 370 to 381, an increase of only three per cent. When measured on the basis of acreage and value, however, the number of rented acres per thousand and the

[1]Agriculture: General Statistics. 70 ff. Tenth Census. 1880. Washington.

number of dollars' worth of rented land per thousand not only was greater than that shown on the preceding basis but has been growing at much faster rates during both of the decades since 1900, especially during the decade just ended. While the proportion of rented farms increased but three per cent between 1910 and 1920, the proportion of leased property values and of leased acreage increased eleven per cent."[1]

Racial and national.—The counties in which the areas studied are located are all below the state average in per-

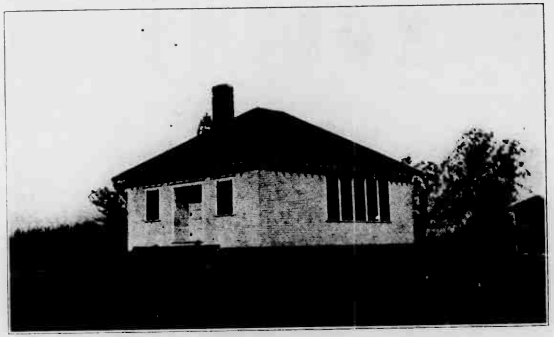

Fig. 3.—A SOUTHEASTERN NEBRASKA SCHOOL

This is a schoolhouse of the newer type now being erected by many districts which have not yet seen their way clear to consolidation.

centage of foreign-born whites among their population, except Fillmore and Clay Counties which are just a little over the state average. In percentage of native-born whites of foreign or mixed parentage, the nine counties stand slightly below the state average altho Polk County and Clay and Fillmore Counties stand a little above the state average on this point also.

Nearly an eighth of all Nebraska farm tenants are foreign born as compared with a quarter of the owner operators. The counties represented by the areas studied are distinctly lower in foreign-born percentage among

[1]Stewart, C. L. The Persistent Increase of Tenant Farming. Jour. of Am. Stat. Assoc. 18, June, 1922, pp. 177-180.

farmers and the areas themselves are still lower than the counties in most cases. The percentages of foreign-born whites and native-born whites of foreign or mixed parentage are lower in the rural communities than in the cities of Nebraska. The fact that they are lower in the areas surveyed, which exclude the small towns and include only the open country, than they are in the entire counties in which these areas are located suggests that these foreign-stock classes constitute higher percentages of the small town population than of the open country population.

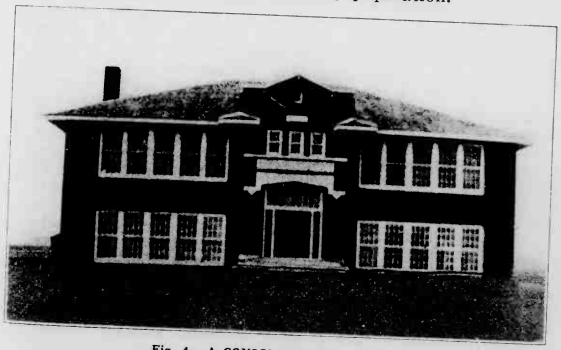

Fig. 4.—A CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL

Where consolidation is possible it furnishes a possible meeting place for many community activities which should be given much greater development than they have yet attained in most Nebraska districts—either consolidated or unconsolidated. This is an open-country western Nebraska school.

The three areas surveyed which show marked indications of racial or national effects are the Walthill area in Thurston County where Indian ownership has a distinct effect, the Stromsburg area in Polk County where many farmers are Swedish, and the Milligan area where Bohemian or Czecho-Slovakian farmers predominate.

DISTANCE TO COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Nearness to community activities important.—The distances from community activities and facilities are of the greatest importance (1) economically and (2) sociolog-

ically. Contact with the rest of the world is urgently demanded by all normal human beings. The more difficult this contact is made by distance or otherwise the less happy

TABLE 4.—*Miles from community activities*

	All operators	Owners	Part-owners	Tenants				Managers
				All	Share-cash	Share	Cash	
Answers	1,099	397	159	534	302	174	58	9
Railway station	3.93	3.22	4.10	3.67	3.53	4.50	3.47	2.5
Trading center	3.95	3.80	4.40	3.93	3.65	4.54	3.38	2.6
Common school	1.54	1.50	1.56	1.59	1.31	1.97	1.65	1.1
High school	4.09	3.70	4.20	4.28	3.89	5.80	3.20	2.6
Sunday school[1]	3.61	3.80	3.60	3.39	3.42	3.65	3.13	2.5
Church	3.57	3.70	3.60	3.32	3.17	3.77	3.14	2.5
Physician[1]	4.04	3.80	4.40	3.94	3.82	4.30	3.33	2.5
Hospital[1]	17.55	17.30	17.7	18.1	18.60	20.40	8.50	6.4

[1]In the Geneva area, distances to Sunday school, physician, and hospital were not asked. In this area part-owners are included with owners, as the Interchurch World Movement schedule did not differentiate them.

are the people and the more inclined are they to move to locations closer to congenial company and to markets in which to sell their produce and buy their supplies.

Fig. 5.—A WESTERN NEBRASKA SCHOOL

Differences in rainfall and in age of community often result in sparser population, fewer pupils, and shorter school terms, in western Nebraska in spite of greater territory per district.

Trading center four miles away.—Since the trading center supplies the necessities of life and many of the com-

munity needs, such as school, church, and recreation, accessibility to this center is in many ways of the most fundamental importance. The fact that the school and church in the country are frequently attended by rural people does not lessen the importance of nearness of country people to trading center and community activities.

In most of the ten areas surveyed as indicated in Figure 1 the distance to the main community activities averages not far from four miles for the operators of all tenures.

Owners a little closer.—Owners are in fact a little closer to most community activities than part-owners or tenants but the difference is not as great in any one area as indicated by the average figures. The apparently rather marked difference between distance of owners and part-owners from community activities results from the fact already noted that a very large share of the part-owners are found in the westernmost or Grant County area where distances are much greater than in most of the other areas. This is partly overcome by the fact that the part-owners are largely concentrated in the Walthill area in Thurston County, where distances are somewhat less than in most other areas. Share tenants exceed even part-owners in average distance to community activities, because they are also concentrated largely in the westernmost areas but do not have the compensating influence of being concentrated in the Walthill area also as the part-owners are.

Hospitals seventeen miles away.—An average distance of over seventeen miles from the farm homes to the nearest hospital arises from the fact that in all but two cases the regular trading center is without any hospital so that the distance to hospital facilities is the distance to some town farther away.

The distance to trading center is distinctly greater than that to the railway station because a number report going to larger towns at a greater distance than their nearest trading point in order to secure larger stocks of goods from which to select and sometimes in order to trade where it is convenient to visit relatives or friends who live in the more distant trading centers.

It is difficult if not impossible to lay down any rules as to distances from community activities. As roads improve and automobiles both multiply and improve, a mile of country road becomes vastly less of a barrier than formerly.

The church and Sunday school.—In 110 cases distance to church or Sunday School was reported as less than the distance to the railway station, a fact which indicated at-

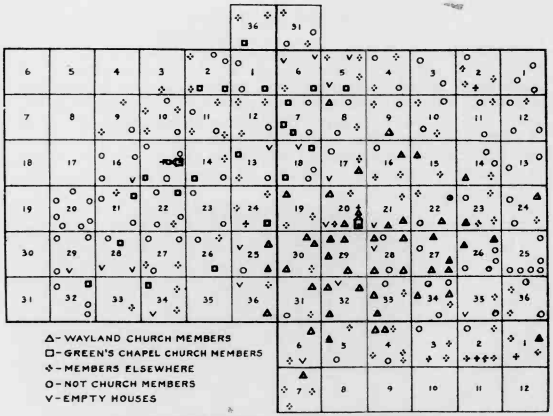

Fig. 6.—OVERLAPPING CHURCH COMMUNITIES
Some forecast that the two old church buildings will eventually be replaced by one new centrally located church.

tendance at open country religious services. Of these cases, 43 occur in the westernmost area studied, where distances to town are greater than in other areas, and 33 occur in the area about Stromsburg in Polk County, where open country churches shown in Figure 6 are factors. In a number of cases the distance to Sunday School reported is less than that to church, indicating the holding of Sunday Schools in schoolhouses or other places in which church services are not held. In some cases the distance to church or Sunday School is greater than that to the nearest railway station. In all cases there are one or more churches at the nearest trading center, but for denominational reasons some prefer to go farther to other churches.

However, there is a strong tendency to concentrate both church and school attendance in larger units either in town or in the open country. The vital thing to be sought is the maintenance of church and school in the closest touch with country people. The church seems indispensable as a means of social control. If it functions properly it is

superior to the best police force as a preventive of all kinds of evil doing, from murder to chicken stealing.

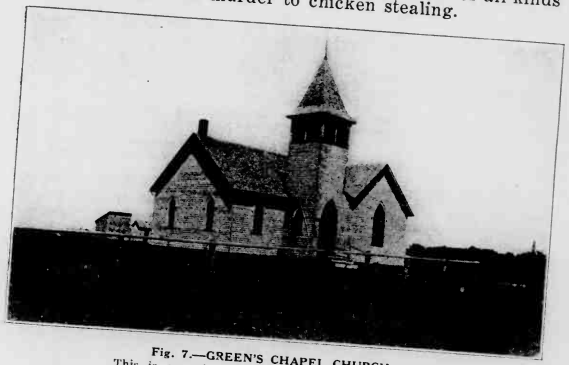

Fig. 7.—GREEN'S CHAPEL CHURCH
This is one of the churches shown in Figure 6.

The common school.—In most of the ten areas surveyed the distance to the common schools is a little over a mile and a half. The importance of keeping farm people in the closest possible touch with the best possible schools arises from the fact that the school is our principal means of progress. If the next generation is to excel this one as

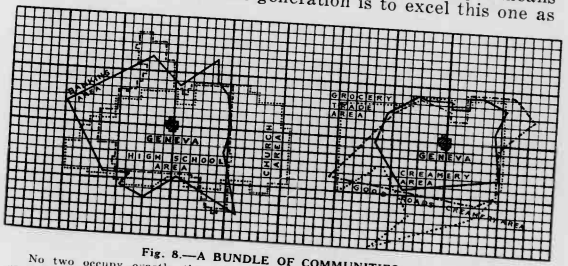

Fig. 8.—A BUNDLE OF COMMUNITIES
No two occupy exactly the same territory. The same one may not have the same territory at all seasons.

much as it should, it can do so only on the basis of the best possible school training.

While the facts brought out above tell us something of the community structure of the areas studied, they were not studied as communities and community boundaries were not determined. The average distances reported here can hardly be regarded as community measurements in any sense in most cases. One exception to this statement is Figure 8, which shows a number of the communities occupying the territory about Geneva in Fillmore County. These are

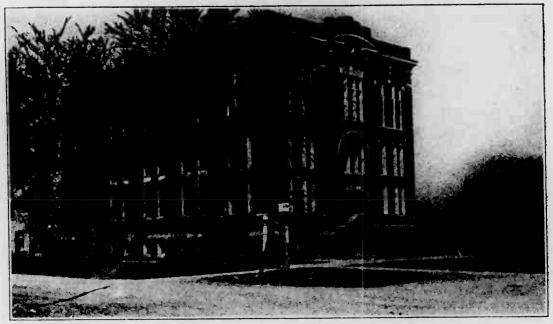

Fig. 9.—A COMMUNITY BUILDING

Every community should have a place for meetings, entertainments, dinners, and other occasions of general interest. Many are being erected in various parts of the state. They need not be as elaborate as the one shown here and usually are not.

mainly "rurban" communities—that is, neither rural nor urban but both rural and urban, since they include people from both town and country mingling together in the same community center activities.

TENURE CHANGES: 1911-1920

What the table shows.—The tenure changes indicated by Table 5 suggest but do not necessarily correctly reflect and measure the stability or instability of the community relationship or of farm management. A man might appear one year as a tenant operator and the next year as owner-operator on the same farm without disturbance to his community relations or his acquaintance with the particular farm which he is operating and his ability to handle that farm. The extent to which shifts were made from farm to farm or community to community will be indicated more clearly in a later table. Of the 1033 farms included in Table 5, only a little over two-fifths (41.1 per cent) were in the hands of tenants in 1911 as compared with nearly half (47.7 per cent) in 1920. In the newer sand-hill area about Stapleton in Logan County there was a much more marked decrease in owner operatorship percentage from 78 to 58.

TABLE 5.—*Tenure changes: 1911-1920*[1]

	1920	1919	1918	1917	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910[2]
Total number	1,033	1,099	1,095	1,089	1,084	1,079	1,075	1,072	1,065	1,060	76
Owners[3]	531	555	573	579	582	600	607	612	620	621	43
Tenants	493	534	513	504	498	475	464	456	441	436	33
Managers	9	10	9	6	4	4	4	4	4	3	
Owners—per cent	51.4	50.5	52.3	53.2	53.6	55.6	56.4	57.1	58.2	58.6	56.6
Tenants—per cent	47.7	48.6	46.9	46.3	46.0	44.0	43.2	42.5	41.4	41.1	43.4
Managers—per cent	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	

[1]Not rented at any time during the entire period: 39.2 per cent.
Rented during entire period: 26.2 per cent.
Sometimes rented, sometimes not: 34.6 per cent.
[2]Geneva schedules contain 1910-1919 data.
[3]Including part-owners.

Two-fifths never rented.—During the decade 1911-1920, two farms out of every five had been in the hands of owners continuously and not farmed by tenants at any time. More than a third had been farmed part of the time by tenants and part of the time by owners, while more than a quarter had been rented for the entire ten years. Much the same was the case in most of the individual areas, but about half the farms in the Logan County area and Milligan area in Fillmore County had not been in the hands of tenants at any time during the decade.

Little change.—The farms studied were arbitrarily so selected that the number of tenants almost equals the number of owners and part-owners combined. If we trace these farms back ten years we find them almost equally divided into the same two groups, in the eastern Nebraska areas. The tenancy increase shown by the table results entirely from changes in the Fillmore, Furnas, and Perkins County areas. All other areas show either distinct decreases in tenancy percentages or, more generally, substantially no change.

In the Filley area in Gage County there is a decrease in tenancy percentage from 58.4 in 1911 to 54.0 in 1920, while

the Stromsburg area in Polk County showed a very distinct decrease from 53.2 per cent to 46.4 per cent altho in that area it had gradually risen from 1911 to 1916 when it reached 55.2 but again declined until 1920. The two southwestern Nebraska areas show very much more rapid changes,—from 30.2 per cent in 1911 in the Cambridge area to 40.8 per cent in 1920, and from 17.3 to 39 per cent in the Grant area in Perkins County. The combined census figures for those counties show a slight decrease in tenancy during the decade, altho in the state as a whole the tenancy percentage was increasing.

TABLE 6.—*Shifts to and from farms surveyed: 1911–1920*

	All operators	Owners	Part-owners	Tenants				Managers
				All	Share-cash	Share	Cash	
Number of farms	1,141	412	159	561	319	178	61	9
Farms without shifts	428	226	89	112	58	40	14	1
Per cent	37.5	54.9	56.0	19.9	18.2	22.5	21.9	11.1
Number of shifts	1,169	265	133	752	444	229	74	19
Per farm	1.02	0.65	0.79	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2	2.1
Years between shifts	9.7	15.1	12.7	7.7	7.1	7.7	8.3	4.8
From:								
Same community	844	187	77	569	327	177	61	11
Per cent[1]	72.2	70.6	58.0	75.6	70.6	77.3	82.4	57.9
Another community	325	78	56	183	117	52	13	8
Per cent[1]	27.8	29.4	42.0	24.4	26.4	22.7	17.6	42.1
To:								
Same community	707	157	74	464	250	158	52	12
Per cent[1]	60.4	59.2	55.6	61.7	56.3	69.0	70.3	63.1
Another community	462	108	59	288	194	71	22	7
Per cent[1]	39.6	40.8	44.4	38.3	43.7	31.0	29.7	36.9

[1]"Not specified" distributed proportionately between "same community" and "another community" in computing percentages. The following facts must be kept in mind or the tenant figures will appear slightly inconsistent: the tabulator who made this table left five tenant farms undetermined as to whether share-cash, share, or cash. Of these none passed thru the decade without any shift, all five changed operators once each, and four of their present operators came from other farms in the same community.

SHIFTS TO AND FROM FARMS SURVEYED: 1911-1920

Are tenants floaters?—Tenancy is often accused of causing shifting from farm to farm and community to community in excess of that which accompanies ownership. Table 6 undertakes to show the extent to which this is true. Less than two farms out of every five of all tenures passed the entire decade 1911-1920 without any change of operator. Less than half of the owner and part-owner farms had changed operators during the ten-year period as compared with four-fifths of the tenant farms.

If we consider the average number of shifts per farm we find that part-owners shift from farm to farm a little

more frequently than owners and that tenants shift about twice as frequently and managers three or four times as frequently as owners.

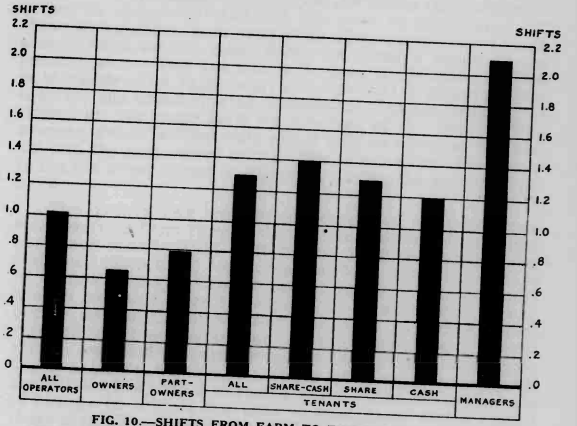

FIG. 10.—SHIFTS FROM FARM TO FARM: 1911-1920
Owners and part-owners shift less frequently than tenants but Nebraska tenantry is much more stable than that of many other states.

In the western part of the state, where conditions are much less settled, changes were occurring at a much more rapid rate. Tenant farms have been changing operators about twice as rapidly as the tabulated state averages show. In some of the individual areas considerable variations were observed from the averages based on all areas, but the only notable one based upon a sufficiently large number of farms to show much reliability was the Milligan area figure indicating only one owner-operator farm out of five had changed hands during the ten-year period. This rate of shift is doubtless much lower now than it will be in the near future even in this very stable Bohemian or Czecho-Slovak community. The advancing age of the present owners will soon bring numerous shifts.

TABLE 7.—*Years on this farm: 1920*[1]
A comparison of census with survey figures

	All	All owners	Full owners	Part-owners	Tenants			Managers
					All	Share and sh're-c'sh	Cash[2]	
All								
Census	124,417	69,672	50,565	19,107	53,430	40,309	13,121	1,315
Per cent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Survey	1,120	563	411	153	547	493	54	9
Per cent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Under 2 years								
Census	27,413	8,900	6,300	2,600	17,814	13,574	4,240	699
Per cent	22.5	13.0	12.7	13.7	34.2	34.4	33.3	57.7
Survey	57	16	11	5	39	36	3	2
Per cent	5.09	2.8	2.7	3.2	7.1	7.3	5.5	22.2
2 to 4 years								
Census	30,240	12,246	8,130	4,116	17,700	13,380	4,320	294
Per cent	24.8	17.8	16.4	21.8	33.9	34.0	33.8	24.2
Survey	250	89	60	29	158	136	22	3
Per cent	22.3	15.8	14.6	18.8	28.9	27.6	40.8	33.4
5 to 9 years								
Census	22,522	12,491	8,442	4,049	9,895	7,505	2,390	136
Per cent	18.5	18.2	17.0	21.4	19.0	19.0	18.7	11.2
Survey	400	150	108	42	246	226	20	4
Per cent	35.7	26.6	26.2	27.4	45.0	45.9	37.0	44.4
10 years or over								
Census	41,817	34,976	26,832	8,144	6,757	4,944	1,813	84
Per cent	34.3	51.0	54.0	43.1	13.0	12.5	14.2	6.9
Survey	413	309	232	77	104	95	9	.....
Per cent	36.9	54.9	56.2	50.3	18.9	19.2	16.6	.....

[1]Compiled from (1) Nebraska survey figures gathered as of March 1, 1920, and (2) Agriculture: General Report and Analytical Table. Volume V, 407 ff. Fourteenth Census. 1920. Washington.

[2]Including unspecified in case of census figures. In the survey none were left unspecified.

Years on this farm.—Table 7 shows how owners, part-owners, and tenants compare in length of time they have been on their present farms (1920).[1]

A third of all Nebraska farmers have been on the same farms for ten years or more—over half the full owners and two-fifths of the part-owners and almost exactly an eighth of even the tenants. Less than a fifth have been on their present farms 5 to 9 years and almost a quarter 2 to 4 years. The principal differences between survey and census figures are noted in the percentages of farmers who had been on their present farms less than two years and in the 5 to 9 year group. This indicates that there is somewhat less shifting from farm to farm in the areas surveyed than in the state as a whole. This is further indicated by the percentages of those who have been on their present farms

[1]Both census and survey figures are presented in spite of the fact that difference in number of farms included and date and method of making the enumeration make any close agreement of results impossible. Survey and census figures, however, agree in some broad general conclusions to which both give support.

ten years or more. The size of the farm business is greater in the areas surveyed than in the state as a whole.

Nebraska compared with other states.—In 1922, 26.9 per cent of all tenants moved from the farms they had been tilling as compared with 15 per cent in Nebraska.[1] If these percentages hold true year after year, the average tenant stays on the same farm less than 4 years in the country as a whole but nearly 7 years in Nebraska. This is in rather close agreement with the 1911-1920 survey figures for the areas studied, indicating that the tenant has stayed on the same farm an average of 7.7 years. The average owner shifted only about half as often as the tenant and the part-owner only a little oftener than the owner in the ten areas shown in Figure 1, during the period 1911-1920.

The owners and part-owners combined in these areas were shifting from farm to farm at the rate of about 7 per cent each year in 1911-1920 but by 1922 the rate for the state had risen to 13.5 or almost as high a rate of change of occupancy as in case of tenant farms which normally change so much more rapidly. This is, of course, a temporary aftermath of wartime purchases at prices which resulted in foreclosures and of the replacement of the stable, seasoned farmers with untried farmers who have been unable to weather the storm of distress thru which agriculture has passed in recent years. The Nebraska rate of change in 1922 is less than in most other states except those of the New England and Middle Atlantic groups.

Distance of shifts.—The figures thus far noted tell us only to what extent farms have changed operators but do not tell us how violent the change has been. They do not indicate whether the new operator has come from another farm in the same locality bringing much local knowledge that will help him in operating his farm or whether he has come from another community. Neither do they tell us whether the former operator has gone to another location in the same locality or whether he has gone into another locality thus breaking his relation with the community's activities and carrying much valuable knowledge

[1]Stewart, C. L. Farm Occupancy, Ownership, and Tenancy and When Do Tenants Move? Preliminary mimeographed statements issued by Division of Land Economics, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, April, 1923. Dr. Stewart's estimates are based upon 10,833 replies from crop correspondents in 86 per cent of the 3026 counties of the United States. Each correspondent was asked two questions among others: (1) What percentage of farms had different OCCUPANTS (tenants or owners) December 1, 1922, from December 1, 1921? ..... per cent. (2) What percentage of farms had different OWNERS December 1, 1922, from December 1, 1921? .....per cent.

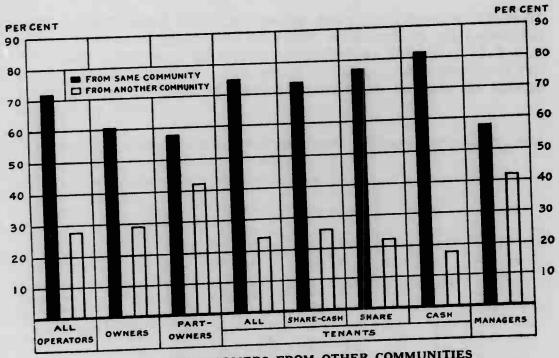

Fig. 11.—FEW FARMERS FROM OTHER COMMUNITIES

Farmers have generally come to their present farms from other farms in the same communities, instead of leaving the community.

that would have aided both him and the locality had he stayed in it.

About three times as many operators have come to these farms from within the same community as from other communities except in the westernmost or Grant area in Perkins

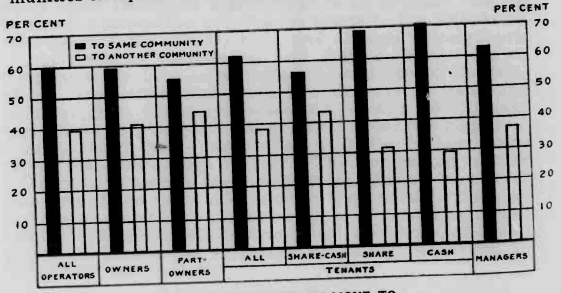

Fig. 12.—WHERE THEY MOVE TO

Three-fifths of the farmers stay in the same community after moving.

County where nearly half were from other communities. Part-owners came from communities other than those of their present residence in greater percentages of the cases than those of any other tenure groups. It will be remembered, however, that a very large share of them were found in the newest areas studied—the westernmost and that in Thurston County which is affected by the presence of Indian lands.

Of the farmers who formerly operated the farms studied in these areas, about three out of five went elsewhere within the community on leaving the farms studied. This fraction is about the same in western Nebraska as in eastern Nebraska areas and does not differ very radically as between tenants and owners.

TABLE 8.—*Farms that changed neither tenure nor operator: 1911-1920*

Town in area	County	All		Owner		Part-owner		Tenants		Managers	
		No.	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*
Total		368	32.4	208	50.7	64	40.2	96	17.3	0	0.0
Loess region areas:											
Nehawka	Cass	48	39.7	28	60.9	6	60.0	14	22.6	0	0.0
Filley	Gage	30	23.8	14	31.8	6	42.9	10	14.7	0	0.0
Milligan	Fillmore	58	46.4	42	71.2	7	50.0	9	17.3	0	0.0
Geneva[1]	Fillmore	30	28.0	20	48.8	0	0.0	10	15.1	0	0.0
Fairfield	Clay	44	40.0	17	55.0	10	62.5	17	27.0	0	0.0
Stromsburg	Polk	48	38.4	24	50.0	7	38.9	17	29.3	0	0.0
Walthill	Thurston	26	20.5	11	42.3	11	36.7	4	5.8	0	0.0
Cambridge	Furnas	35	28.0	26	40.6	2	28.6	7	13.7	0	0.0
High Plains region area:											
Grant	Perkins	25	20.3	11	40.8	14	29.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sand Hill region area:											
Stapleton	Logan	24	46.2	15	57.7	1	33.3	8	34.8	0	0.0

[1]Only 101 Geneva area farms are used in this table instead of 107 as in other tables in which farms from this area are included.

Nearly a third (32.4 per cent) of the farms passed thru the entire decade 1911-1920 without either change of tenure or change of operator. In other words, the same man continued to operate the land in the same relation to it, being either owner, part-owner, or tenant during the entire period without a change from one of those tenures to another. In addition to this, 2.9 per cent of the farms were operated during the entire period by the same man but with a change in tenure as when a tenant buys a farm he has been operating and continues upon it as an owner. Of the owner-operated farms in these areas in 1920, 50.7 per

cent have passed thru the entire period without change of either tenure or operator; of those operated by part-owners, 40.2 per cent; and of those operated by tenants, 17.3 per cent. In a number of areas, however, the percentages were higher in case of part-owners than in case of either owners or tenants.

TABLE 9.—*Automobiles, telephones, mail delivery, neighbors, and roads*

Items	All operators		Owners		Part-owners		Tenants		Managers	
	No.	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*
Total in areas	1,141	100	412	100	159	100	561	100	9	100
Automobiles	904	79.2	342	83.0	140	88.1	421	75.04	1	11.1
Telephones	859	75.2	350	84.9	103	64.7	400	71.3	6	66.7
Not specified	23	2.01	9	2.2	3	1.9	11	1.9	0	0.0
Miles to										
Next neighbor	1,104	.35	398	0.32	155	0.45	542	0.36	9	0.33
Highway	996	0.16	361	0.12	152	0.10	475	0.22	8	0.03
Main road	1,017	0.46	350	0.54	154	0.20	505	0.49	8	0.10
On R. F. D.	885	77.6	320	77.6	99	62.2	457	81.8	9	100.0

COMMUNICATION

Important.—Communication is an absolute necessity to community life or any other group life. Communication from the outside world by means of the printed page as received in these areas has already been discussed.[1] Some other factors in communication of peculiar interest to rural communities are the automobile, the telephone, mail delivery, the country road, and distance to neighbors.

Automobiles, telephones, and mail delivery.—No attempt is made here to estimate the influence of the telephone, automobile, and rural free delivery in banishing isolation from the farm household, closing fourth-class post offices, wiping the smaller towns from the map, and concentrating church and other activities in the towns rather than in the open country. The women and smaller children have been in many ways more affected than other members of the household because they were formerly so much more isolated by the lack of good means of communication. The effects of the automobile, telephone, and mail delivery will only be suggested by noting the extent to which they are present.

[1]Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 180, June, 1922. Out of print, but available in all State Agricultural Experiment Station Libraries. Sent also to all Nebraska and many other libraries when published.

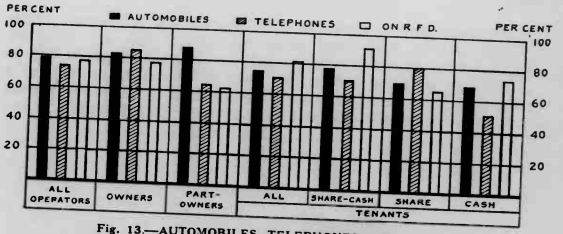

Fig. 13.—AUTOMOBILES, TELEPHONES, AND MAIL
In eastern Nebraska, mail delivery is more general than either the automobile or the telephone, especially among tenants, but the westernmost area has no rural free mail delivery.

Automobiles are found on four farms out of every five studied and telephones on nearly as great a proportion. Each is found on six owner farms out of every seven but automobiles seem to be more strictly in the necessity class and less in the luxury class than telephones. At least automobiles are owned by a greater percentage of the part-owners and tenants than telephones. The part-owners stand above both owners and tenants in percentage owning automobiles, but well below both in percentage having telephones. This is true in both eastern and western Nebraska areas as far as the telephone goes, altho it is affected and intensified by the concentration of the part-owners in the westernmost or Grant area where low percentages of all tenures have telephones, but where the distances to be traveled make the automobile more of a necessity than in the areas farther east. In all areas smaller percentages of tenants than of owners have automobiles except in the Milligan area.

Automobiles–urban and rural.—Nearly one farm out of every three in the entire United States has one or more automobiles. We have no strictly comparable figures for the city homes of the United States or for city and country combined. In Nebraska there are 72.4 per cent as many automobiles as there are country and town homes combined, while 75.6 per cent of the farms of the state report automobiles, so there is apparently little difference between town and country in this state in the ratio of number of families to number of automobiles. In the West North Central group of states, of which Nebraska is a part, only 57.6 per cent of the farms report automobiles.

TABLE 10.—*Automobiles and telephones on farms: 1920* [1]

Area	Farms	Farms reporting	
		Automobiles	Telephones
United States	6,448,343	1,979,564	2,498,493
Per cent	100	30.7	38.8
West North Central States	1,096,951	631,631	762,442
Per cent	100	57.6	69.5
Nebraska	124,417	94,004	95,050
Per cent	100	75.6	76.4

[1]Agriculture: Reports for States. Volume VI. Part 1. 50 ff. Fourteenth Census. 1920. Washington.

In the ten areas studied, four farms out of every five report the possession of automobiles. In the nine counties in which these ten areas are located, there are 27,718 country and town homes and 20,974 automobiles, or about three for every four homes, the proportion being a little higher than that for the state as a whole. In all the eastern Nebraska areas studied, except that about Milligan in Fillmore County, it seems that larger percentages of the country than of the town homes have automobiles. In the sand-hill and western areas, however, the reverse is true.

Telephones.—Nearly two farms out of every five in the United States have telephones, as compared with three out of every four in Nebraska.

Distance to roads and neighbors.—There is practically no difference between owners and tenants in distance to highways, main roads, or nearest neighbors. Part-owners are nearly one and a half times as far from their nearest neighbors as owners but this arises from the fact that they are so largely living in the westernmost or Grant area in Perkins County. The part-owners of eastern Nebraska have exactly the same average distance to neighbors as owners. The nearest neighbor is from a quarter to a third of a mile away and the house is practically on a highway. In the Grant area, however, it is from a half to three-quarters of a mile to the nearest neighbor. The average distance from the 1141 farms to a main road is less than half a mile and to a highway a sixth of a mile.

Some local variations.—While there is some variation from area to area in the percentages of homes reached by telephones and mail deliveries, these variations seem to affect owners and tenants alike, leaving them everywhere almost equally well supplied with such service. No rural mail delivery is reported in the Grant area. In the other areas, however, six houses out of every seven have such delivery. In the Cambridge area just west of the center of the southern tier of counties, every farm except two has a telephone, and nearly nine out of ten tenants and part-owners have rural mail delivery as compared with nineteen out of every twenty owners. In the Grant area still farther west, however, telephones reached the homes of only seven out of ten owners and slightly more than that proportion of tenants but less than six out of ten part-owners.

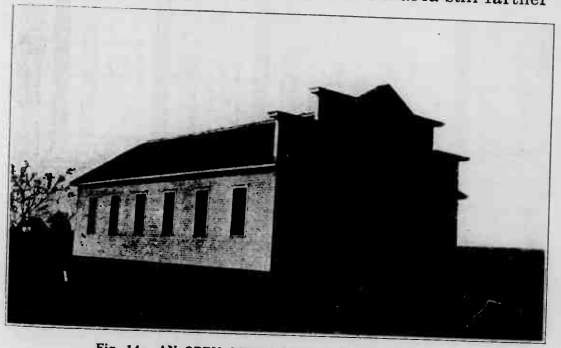

Fig. 14.—AN OPEN COUNTRY COMMUNITY CENTER
This is primarily a Czecho-Slovak lodge hall but is also the center of many other community activities.

Visiting and exchanging work.[1]—Frequent visits to neighbors are a little more general among tenants than among owners in the Geneva area. They are reported by two-thirds of the tenants and well above three-fifths (63.4 per cent) of the owners. The tenants much more frequently exchange work than do the owners during the harvest and other busy seasons, partly perhaps because they are farming more land with less equipment. The only kinds of work the owners more generally report exchanging than do the tenants are corn shelling and haying. These kinds of work were much less frequently exchanged than the other kinds reported. Only one out of every

[1]Based entirely on the Geneva area in Fillmore County surveyed in cooperation with the Interchurch World Movement.

thirteen or fourteen reported exchanging corn shelling work and one out of every six or seven haying work, while more than half reported exchanging work during harvest and of course exchange of work at threshing time is practically universal.

TABLE 11.—*Participation in community organizations*

	All	Attend		Member of			
		Church	Sunday school	Church	Farmers' organization	Women's society	Lodge
All operators	1,141	693	315	534	471	1	441
Per cent	100	60.8	27.6	46.8	41.3	0.08	38.6
Wives	1,017	698	324	566	64	227	185
Per cent	100	68.6	31.8	55.7	6.3	22.3	18.2
Children	2,647	1,303	937	648	19	21	42
Per cent	100	49.2	35.4	24.5	0.72	0.79	1.58
Owners	412	251	96	195	181	1	175
Per cent	100	61.0	23.3	47.3	44.0	0.24	42.4
Wives	369	229	99	207	19	85	73
Per cent	100	62.0	26.8	56.1	5.2	23.0	19.8
Children	1,166	505	383	286	11	8	21
Per cent	100	43.3	32.8	24.5	0.94	0.69	1.8
Part-owners	159	105	64	88	85	0	63
Per cent	100	66.1	40.2	55.4	53.4	0	39.6
Wives	151	112	68	97	14	40	35
Per cent	100	74.2	45.0	64.2	9.3	26.5	23.2
Children	457	256	208	87	3	8	8
Per cent	100	56.0	45.8	19.0	0.67	1.8	1.8
Tenants	561	332	155	247	205	0	202
Per cent	100	59.1	27.6	43.9	36.5	0	36.0
Wives	491	352	157	258	31	102	76
Per cent	100	71.7	31.9	52.6	6.3	20.8	15.5
Children	1,008	535	346	275	5	5	13
Per cent	100	53.0	34.3	27.2	0.49	0.49	1.3
Managers	9	5	0	4	0	0	1
Per cent	100	55.5	0.0	44.5	0.0	0.0	11.0
Wives	6	5	0	4	0	0	1
Per cent	100	83.5	0.0	66.7	0.0	0.0	17.0
Children	16	7	0	0	0	0	0
Per cent	100	43.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CHURCHES, LODGES, AND FARM ORGANIZATIONS

Men.—Thru membership and attendance, church and Sunday School are reaching more operators of all tenure groups than any other organization in all the areas except that peopled by those of Bohemian or Czecho-Slovak descent about Milligan. It is true that in eastern Nebraska membership in some farmers' organization is very slightly greater than that in the church, and lodge membership is almost as large, but the church is exerting an influence thru the attendance of non-members that can hardly be regarded as possible among the other organizations, altho

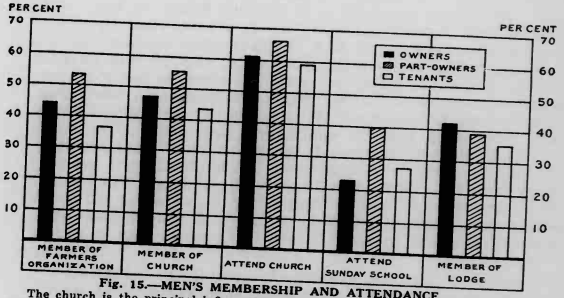

Fig. 15.—MEN'S MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE
The church is the principal influence both in membership and attendance. Part-owners are prominent in most memberships and attendance.

their benefits also are doubtless by no means confined to members.

In the southwestern areas church membership and attendance still more pronouncedly overshadow the influence of other organizations. Farm organizations stand below lodges in numbers of members. Probably this is to be accounted for by the fact that many still regard themselves as retaining church and lodge membership established elsewhere, while membership in many farm organizations —especially local ones—was dropped on moving into this newer portion of the state. Membership in farm organizations is usually of a more strictly economic nature and more freely dropped and regained whenever it again becomes desirable or possible to get into active personal touch with such an organization.

These southwestern Nebraska areas are the only ones studied in which church membership is more general than church attendance except that the Milligan area shows a tendency in the same direction but with a smaller excess of membership over attendance reported. In the Milligan area, of 125 farmers, 34 reported church membership, 83 lodge membership, and 16 membership in a farm organization of one kind or another. Stromsburg, the only other area in which the people are predominantly of immediate foreign origin, is unusually high in church attendance and not far from the average in church membership.

Part-owners in eastern Nebraska more generally report

all kinds of membership and attendance than either owners or tenants except in case of lodge membership. Only one-third of the part-owners are lodge members as compared with two-fifths of the tenants and a still higher proportion of owners.

It is indicated rather clearly then that farmers' economic and social activities are much less fully organized in the western part of the state where population is more widely scattered and distances to neighbors and community centers are greater. This was to be expected, but another thing which many would have expected does not prove true. Tenants and their families are not markedly below owners and part-owners in membership and attendance. In fact they make fully as good a showing as the owners. This varies considerably from area to area, but when all the eastern areas are averaged together the tenant has a slight advantage in church attendance, Sunday School attendance, and church membership, while the owner has a little more distinct but still not very marked advantage in membership in farm organizations and lodges.

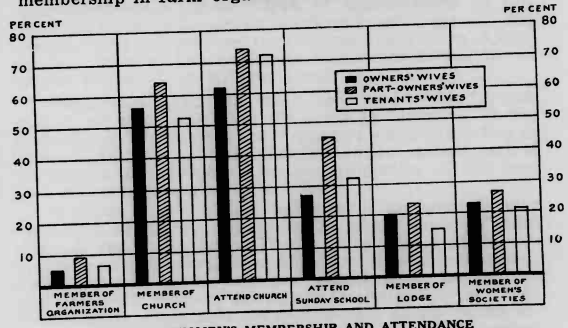

Fig. 16.—WOMEN'S MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE
Women are less generally members of other than church organizations.

Women.—Wives attend church and Sunday School and hold church membership a little more generally than their husbands. Of course, they hold women's society membership to the exclusion of the men and are only less completely outnumbered by men in the percentages reporting

farm organization membership. There are only a little over half as many women as men lodge members. The wives of part-owners more generally report membership in the various organizations and more generally attend church and Sunday School than the wives of owners, but are excelled on some of these points by the wives of tenants, who also generally stand above the wives of owners in frequency of reporting such membership and attendance. The principal exceptions to this statement that part-owners' wives are more frequently members of the various organizations and attendants at church and Sunday School are found in the Grant areas, where owners' wives have the remarkably high figure of 92.3 per cent membership, and in the Milligan and Walthill areas, where the wives of part-owners fall below those of both owners and tenants.

Children.—Children of owners are most frequently found as members of organizations and in attendance upon church and Sunday School in the eastern Nebraska areas, but the children of tenants stand higher than those of part-

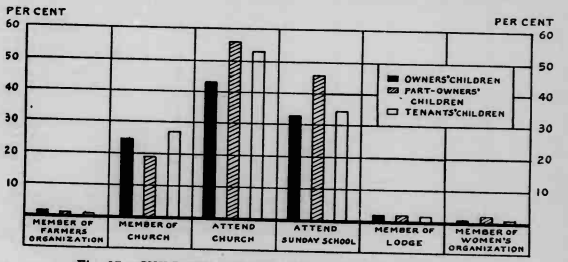

Fig. 17.—CHILDREN'S MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE
Children are still less generally members of organizations than either their fathers or their mothers.

owners in all these particulars except membership in farm organizations and women's societies, of which very few children are members anyhow. These organizations and lodges do, however, number a few children among their membership in most of the areas studied. In the western Nebraska areas, however, children of part-owners excelled those of both owners and tenants in all these particulars ex-

cept church attendance, in which they are slightly excelled by the children of owners in the westernmost or Grant area in Perkins County.

Summary.—From the farms in the ten areas, we find three-fifths of all the men, over two-thirds of the women, and half of the children reporting church attendance. The Sunday School attendance includes over a fourth of the men, nearly a third of the women, and more than a third of the children. Church membership claims nearly half of the men, more than half of the women, and nearly a fourth of the children. The eastern areas stand higher in all these respects and the western areas lower.

Farmers' organizations and lodges have almost equal membership among the men but both stand below the church as indicated by the 1920 figures. Figures obtained since the recent drives for membership in various farm organizations might tell a different story. Only one woman in every fourteen and less than one child in every hundred have membership in a farmers' organization. Only a fifth of the women and fifteen children in every thousand have lodge membership. Most lodges, of course, made no provision for children becoming members in any degree. The Grange, however, provides for children and so does at least one Bohemian or Czecho-Slovak lodge represented in the returns secured from Milligan area.

Offices held.—Only 62 offices were held by the farmers studied, or about one office for every 17 farmers. In the western part of the state but one out of every thirty-five or thirty-six farmers hold an office, but in the eastern part of the state nearly twice as great a proportion of the men hold offices of one kind or another.

Of these offices, almost half are in farmers' elevator companies or in local organizations of the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union. The other offices are widely scattered among churches, federal farm loan associations, school boards, breeders' associations, lodges, women's societies, farmers' stores, and the Farm Bureau. The Farm Bureau offices held are as numerous as any others except those in the Farmers' Union and the farmers' elevator companies. The number of farm bureau offices held would doubtless be much greater now if a new enumeration could be had, because of the great increase in farm bureau membership and in number of county farm bureau organizations that has occurred since the field work of this survey was done.

The number of offices reported is very small as compared with the number of members furnished from these households in organizations in which farmers and town people are members together. They furnished 441 lodge members in the areas studied but held only five lodge offices, 693 church attendants and members but only five church officers, and 315 Sunday School attendants but not a single

TABLE 12.—*Offices held by farmers*

	All	Owners	Part-owners	Tenants			
				All	Share-cash	Share	Cash
Total in areas	1,025	371	159	495	276	167	52
Officeholders[1]	46	26	8	12	9	1	2
Per cent	4.5	7.00	5.03	2.42	3.3	0.6	3.84
Offices held	62	39	8	15	12	1	2
Farmers' Elevator	13	9	1	3	2	0	1
Farmers' Union	18	9	2	7	5	1	1
Farmers' Club	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lodge	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
Church	4	1	2	1	1	0	0
Sunday School	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Women's Society	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Political	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Farm Loan Ass'n	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
School Board	5	2	2	1	1	0	0
Thresher Company	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Breeders' Association	3	1	0	2	2	0	0
Farmers' Union Telephone Co.	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Farm Bureau	4	4	0	0	0	0	0
Unspecified	4	3	0	1	1	0	0
Geneva area[2]	107	41	..	66	0	0	0
Officeholders	10	8	..	2	0	1	1
Offices held	12	9	..	3	0	2	1

[1]Seven held two offices apiece, 1 held three, and 1 held four offices.
[2]Part-owners included with owners in the Geneva area. Geneva area figures are included in only the last three lines of this table because the schedule used in that area determined only how many offices were held but did not list the different kinds of offices.

Sunday School officer unless some of the five church officers reported are Sunday School officers.

It is a matter of common comment that the cities have, in the past at least, drawn a large share of their leadership from among the people reared in the open country. The figures just quoted, however, seem to suggest that so long as people continue to live in the open country it is more convenient for them to leave much of the leadership of many of the organizations of which they are members in the hands of the town dwellers who are also members.

TABLE 13.—*Home and community amusements*

	All operators		Owners		Part-owners		Tenants		Managers	
	No.	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*
Total	1,141	100.0	412	100.0	159	100.0	561	100.0	9	100.0
Outdoor games	171	14.9	61	14.8	36	22.6	74	13.1	0	0.0
Indoor games										
Checkers	348	30.4	142	34.5	75	47.1	130	23.1	1	11.1
Chess	52	4.5	16	3.8	12	7.5	24	4.2	0	0.0
Card games	400	34.9	150	36.4	69	43.4	180	32.0	1	11.1
Board games[1]	196	17.1	73	17.7	47	29.5	76	13.5	0	0.0
None	429	37.5	134	32.5	40	25.1	247	44.0	8	88.8
Musical inst's.										
Piano	387	35.3	166	40.3	70	44.0	149	26.5	2	22.8
Organ	185	16.2	73	17.7	32	20.1	80	14.2	0	0.0
Violin	75	6.5	30	7.2	20	12.6	25	4.3	0	0.0
Accordion	19	1.6	7	1.7	4	1.5	8	1.4	0	0.0
Phonograph	184	16.0	79	19.2	27	16.9	77	13.6	1	11.1
Others	36	3.1	16	3.8	4	1.5	16	2.8	0	0.0
None	315	27.6	84	20.4	32	20.1	193	34.3	6	66.6
Attend										
Picnics	926	80.4	334	81.2	138	86.4	451	80.2	3	33.3
Fairs	971	84.8	345	83.8	147	92.2	475	84.3	4	44.4
Games	539	47.2	182	44.2	77	48.3	279	49.7	1	11.1
Dances	318	27.9	112	27.2	37	22.7	167	29.7	2	22.2
Movies	513	44.9	116	28.2	91	56.4	302	53.8	4	44.4
Parties	657	57.2	238	57.9	109	65.3	309	55.0	1	11.1
Celebrations	650	56.9	237	57.8	107	65.1	305	54.3	1	11.1

[1]Includes dominoes, caroms, crokinole, etc.

AMUSEMENTS

Change in attitude toward amusements.—From the time when amusement and recreation were regarded as positively sinful for adults and as merely to be tolerated among children, the attitude toward them has undergone a progressive change. Bear-baiting was said to be objectionable to the ascetic Puritan, not because of pain to the bear but because of pleasure to the spectator.

Now we realize that "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" and that the same principle applies equally to his sister, father, and mother. We recognize amusement and recreation as natural outlets for surplus energy, a good community unifier, and a good stimulus to work and to wholesome country life for all farm people—owners and tenants alike.

Amusements to meet the farmer's needs.—Unlike town people in respect to amusements, farm people need amusement not so much for the outdoor life as for the mental and social development and for the promotion of cooperative team work which it affords. Other forms of recreation

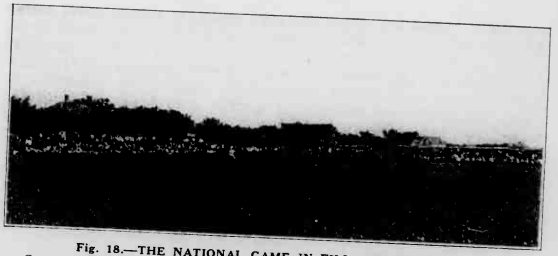

Fig. 18.—THE NATIONAL GAME IN FILLMORE COUNTY
Contrast this crowd with the one shown in Figure 19. In Fillmore County the population is 24 per square mile and in the other 4.5.

Fig. 19.—A GOOD GAME BUT A SMALL CROWD
Sparse population in a low rainfall region is the reason for a smaller crowd in this picture.

which will lead to the promotion of mental contests and to a knowledge of a list of desirable books to be secured and read might well be encouraged.

Certain card games give a pleasant combination of chance and skill. Music requires harmonious cooperation. Horseshoe pitching uses equipment that is simple and almost always at hand. Baseball is simple enough in its requirements but demands too large numbers for everyday amusement. Debating and literary societies should be much commoner than they are.

Farmers' amusements should be of two general kinds: (1) Those of everyday occurrence at home, and (2) those of occasional occurrence in neighborhood or community groups. Both kinds may ignore mere fresh air requirements, which farm work meets so well, and may emphasize (1) mental development, (2) physical grace rather than mere strength, (3) a love of nature, and (4) the ability to cooperate with other members of the household, neighborhood, or community.

Kinds of amusements reported.—The amusements studied are mainly those enjoyed by whole families or communities together. They include (1) outdoor games, (2) indoor games, (3) home music, (4) neighborhood and community social gatherings, (5) outdoor games attended by the community as spectators, (6) moving pictures, (7) chautauquas, and (8) miscellaneous amusements.

Folk games played by children are omitted as a highly specialized study, commercialized amusements aside from the moving pictures are omitted almost entirely, and reading matter as a source of amusement, recreation, and instruction has already been fully discussed elsewhere.[1]

Outdoor games.—Only about one-sixth of the households report that they play outdoor games, altho we shall see that nearly half attend athletic games as spectators. This may result from the facts that (1) the need for outdoor games is felt less because of the outdoor life of many members of the farm household, (2) the open country population is not very dense, so that too great a distance must be traveled in gathering sufficient members for either team play or mass play, and (3) the inquiry may not have been sufficiently detailed to detect all outdoor games played.

The outdoor games most frequently specified are: baseball, tennis, horseshoes, boxing, wrestling, croquet, and children's games. The only children's games specified by name are black man and tug-of-war.

Outdoor games are most generally reported by part-owners and least frequently by tenants, with owners about midway between the other two tenure classes. The team work and discipline of these outdoor games seem not to be very generally secured. Wherever time and circumstances permit, such play should prove a valuable factor in teaching communities to work together in many ways.

Home needs and indoor games.—Everyday needs must be met by home amusements. Farm people cannot be

[1]Reading Matter in Nebraska Farm Homes. Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 180, June, 1922.

away from home as often as their town cousins. This is particularly true during the busier season and in the more sparsely settled regions where distances are greater and where there is much live stock which demands a great deal of attention each day. Such daily needs may be met by reading, by children's games, by games for small groups, by inexpensive equipment for mental development, and by radio which is increasingly enabling even the most isolated to listen to the world's music, addresses, and news. Home story telling should be more used for the children in the home. It is enjoyed by the elders also.

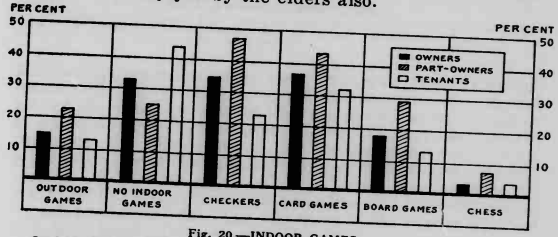

Fig. 20.—INDOOR GAMES

Outdoor games are low in popularity as compared with indoor games, chief among which are checkers and various kinds of card games, including such games as authors, flinch, and pit. About a third were without indoor games, but more than four-fifths failed to report outdoor games.

Indoor games divide with reading matter, home music, and children's play the responsibility for most of the everyday indoor amusements in the farm home. Other diversions supply special needs rather than the regular daily demand. It is just in this matter of indoor games that the tenant falls furthest behind and the part-owners push furthest ahead. Three-fourths of the part-owners and two-thirds of the owners but less than half the tenants have equipment for indoor games.

The more frequent absence of equipment for indoor games in the tenant's household can hardly be accounted for on the basis of lack of time. He does not fall behind the owner in taking time for picnics, fairs, dances, parties, and other similar away-from-home amusements. The slight cost involved can hardly keep the tenant from having checkers and the various kinds of card games. What, then, is the reason? Perhaps it is because the tenants' children are younger than those of the owners and part-owners.

They have not yet so generally reached the age at which they demand these indoor games, but are still satisfied with the children's games, such as "Hunt the Thimble," for which even such inexpensive equipment as a checkerboard is not needed. Perhaps it is in part because these indoor games are accumulated gradually, coming into one home after another and staying wherever admission is once gained, so that the older homes more frequently have them. Neither of these reasons furnishes a satisfactory answer to the question nor do both give a full solution. If these reasons did give the solution, the part-owners should stand about midway between the tenant and the owner in the matter of indoor games instead of standing above both.

Card games such as authors, rook, flinch, somerset, and those requiring ordinary playing cards are played in over a third of all homes—two out of every five owner homes, half the part-owner homes, and nearly a third of the tenant homes. Checkers stand next in popularity, being played in nearly a third of the homes. Chess is played in only one out of every twenty or twenty-five homes; dominoes, in one out of every thirty; and board games, such as caroms or crokinole, in one out of every six.

Home music.—Musical instruments of some kind are found in nearly three-fourths of the homes. Four-fifths of the owners and part-owners and nearly two-thirds of the tenants have them. The piano is the most popular musical instrument, particularly among the owners and part-owners, more than two-fifths of whom have pianos as compared with a little more than a quarter of the tenants. The organ and the phonograph divide honors almost exactly evenly for second place in popularity among the musical instruments found. Each is possessed by one home out of every six. Here again tenants stand below both owners and part-owners, as they do in fact in the case of every musical instrument. The violin is found in about one home out of every fourteen and the accordion in one out of every sixty. The accordion might reasonably have been expected in considerable numbers in the Milligan and Stromsburg areas but only two were reported in the Stromsburg area notwithstanding the Swedish origin of its people. It is found in about one home out of every ten in the Milligan area.

It is difficult to say whether or not this increasing disuse of the accordion arises from a conscious desire to have a musical instrument more generally used by those who have lived here longer, from the greater ease with which other musical instruments are procured on the market, or from the increased

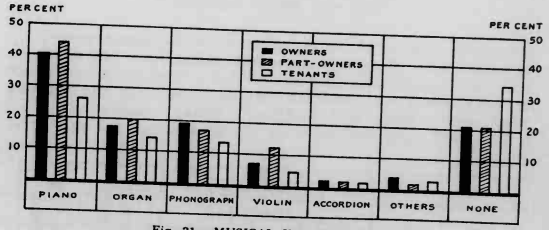

Fig. 21.—MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

The piano is found more than twice as frequently as any other musical instrument. The organ and the phonograph are its closest competitors. Over a fifth of the homes were without musical instruments.

purchasing power leading to the purchase of more expensive instruments either because they better express the musical side of the people or because they are prized as an indication of economic power. This process seems to have been an unconscious one. Residents of the communities were themselves surprised at the figures but agree that they are probably correct. A Swedish graduate student from another state reports that in his community the accordion was formerly played by substantially all the boys who came to the parties but that this is no longer the case.

About one home out of every thirty has some other instrument, such as the cornet, trombone, saxophone, horn, drum, banjo, guitar, or violoncello.

Away - from - home amusements.—Away - from - home amusements cannot be of everyday use to farmers and must be rarer in the busier seasons of the year. They should, however, be of reasonable frequency to break up monotony and to avoid narrow individualism. They should operate thru neighborhood visiting, women's clubs, literary societies attended by the whole family, and thru other organizations and agencies. Some of the away-from-home amusements reported are fairs, picnics, the chautauqua, and miscellaneous amusements.

Fairs.—Fairs are the most common among the away-from-home amusements. They attract the members of more than six households out of every seven. The fair is a mixture of economic, educational, and social activities. Exhibitors contest for premiums in part in the game spirit, in part for the sake of learning from their competitors, and in part for

the advertising gained or for the sake of immediate sales. The vast majority of fair-goers, however, exhibit nothing. They attend in part for the sake of learning and very largely for catered or other amusements or for the sake of meeting old friends and acquaintances. Fair managements are giving more and more attention to banishing objectionable commercial amusements. They may well give still more attention to old settlers' days, games between local athletic teams, and addresses which mingle instruction with inspiration and amusement.

The fair comes at a time of year when farm people can best cooperate in mass amusements because work, weather, and road conditions favor it as they do not at other seasons. Community play days might well be fostered at this time of year by schools, farm bureaus, churches, granges, and other agencies.

Picnics.—Picnics are a fairly close second to fairs, attracting the members of four households out of every five. They should be of more frequent occurrence among country neighborhoods. They are of high value in making country life more agreeable to both old and young. Young people naturally look forward with much pleasure to a coming picnic. It is for them an important event. The good times which they enjoy at these picnics remain with them ever pleasant memories of country life.

Those responsible for the picnic should give some attention to a careful plan for the day's outing in order that there may be plenty of games and other wholesome forms of amusement to keep everybody interested. Everyone if possible should be made to feel that there was not a dull moment during the time spent at the picnic.

Parties.—Nearly three households out of every five report going to parties, aside from dancing parties. The party is more definitely, formally, and purely for neighborhood recreation than most of the other amusements studied. The others are single family affairs as in case of home games or larger community matters as in case of fairs and all the other away-from-home attractions studied. Probably part of the dances and perhaps some of the picnics were also neighborhood rather than community in scope.

The party is often selective even within a neighborhood or small group of neighborhoods. It may be based on school, class, club, or family relationship groups or follow other lines of cleavage. It is of ancient and honorable lineage among farm people.

Celebrations.—Fourth-of-July celebrations doubtless dominate the celebration field. An occasional celebration of some local event occurs but it is usually not annual. At first glance many may be surprised that less than three-fifths report celebrations. Many Fourth-of-July observances, however, take the form of family or other picnics. The date is

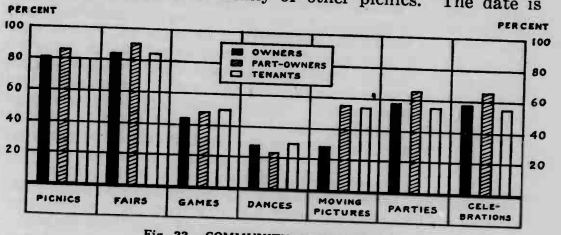

Fig. 22.—COMMUNITY AMUSEMENTS

Very large percentages of the households of both owners and tenants engage in community amusements and the hired men participate largely.

in the midst of a busy season and some feel that they can show more true patriotism by raising something to feed the nation than by attending celebrations when crops need work so badly. The pageant or historical play may be used effectively in local history celebrations and might well be used on national holidays.

Dances.—Attendance at dances was reported by only about a quarter of the households. There is great difference in attitude toward it and in the character of the dance itself. It seems to be in greatest favor and least disfavor in some of the more sparsely inhabited regions.

Games.—Attendance at games by nearly half of the households while only a sixth played outdoor games may be variously viewed. Some deplore the commercialization and professionalism which are leading town and country people both to hire others to play their games for them. Others rejoin that nothing closer to actual participation is possible under the circumstances, and that good games are possible only thru high school or town teams. The appeal is too largely to a mere desire to win instead of a desire for personal participation or for a high class game. One town of about 1000 population which supports a baseball team with a payroll of $425 per month and pays an outside pitcher $35 a game can get a much larger crowd to see a victory over a rival

town than to see a better game against a better team from a greater distance.

Moving pictures.—Nearly half of the households report attending moving pictures—over a quarter of the owners, nearly three-fifths of the part-owners, and over half of the tenants. The screen is a great power for good or evil among farmers. It can show them the rest of the world and can show them to the rest of the world. It is important that it do both wisely. It should do both in such a way as to bring the most valuable information, inspiration, and amusement. It should never foster class prejudice or any other evil or debasing influence. Only healthy class consciousness should result but this necessitates a careful selection of films.

The chautauqua and other amusements.—The chautauqua is prominently mentioned by the reports from a number of the areas. It cannot be too highly commended as a form of recreation and amusement eminently adapted to the needs of farm people. In the Grant area school shows, basket dinners, suppers, socials, church parties, and summer vacations are rather frequent sources of amusement. In this area 60 per cent engage in hunting, while trapping, fishing, and motoring are also reported.

Tenure.—Part-owners attend these away-from-home amusements and recreations a little more generally than

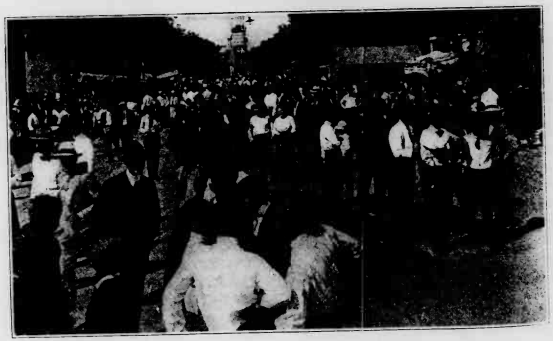

Fig. 23.—THE STREET FAIR OR CARNIVAL

Some forms of commercialized amusements take money out of the community without leaving as wholesome effects as home-catered amusements.

owners and tenants but the differences are usually not very great except in case of moving pictures, which are attended by more than half the tenants and part-owners but by only about a quarter of the owners.

Hired men's amusements.—Hired men engage in away-from-home amusements and recreations at least two or three times as generally as they do in home games of their own. They doubtless use games and reading matter and perhaps to some extent the musical instruments belonging to their employers. A quarter of them have card games, a sixth checkers, and nearly a tenth board games, but less than one in every thirty has chess. Very few have movable instruments other than accordions and phonographs. Pianos and organs were reported by more than a sixth of the hired men. The greater frequency with which these less movable instruments were reported is rather surprising.

Tenants, much more generally than owners, report that their hired men engage in away-from-home amusements. Part-owners more generally had hired men than either owners or tenants and these hired men more generally participate in away-from-home amusements than hired men of either owners or tenants. Three-fourths of all hired men attend fairs; more than two-thirds go to picnics; and nearly three-fifths attend moving pictures. Nearly half attend games, parties, celebrations, and more than a quarter attend dances. Only one in every fourteen plays outdoor games. Every hired man attends celebrations and two-thirds of them have checkers and card games and patronize moving picture shows.

Kinds of amusement and recreation to be encouraged.—It has been said that farmers will play only under a work camouflage. This is particularly true of mass recreation such as picnics fostered by cooperative elevator or other similar enterprises and the picnics and dinners fostered by the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union whose activities in Nebraska are largely economic.

However, according to the showing just made, some of the farmers' recreation needs are being at least fairly well met. Face-to-face relations with neighbors and with fellowbeings in the community and the outside world are increasingly facilitated by telephones, mail service, better roads, railroads, and other means of communication. These means of communication should be used to promote team play in games to bring about better cooperation in solving the problems of the farm classes and in breaking down class prejudice.

Other recreation needs might just as easily be much better met if more fully realized by those most concerned, while still

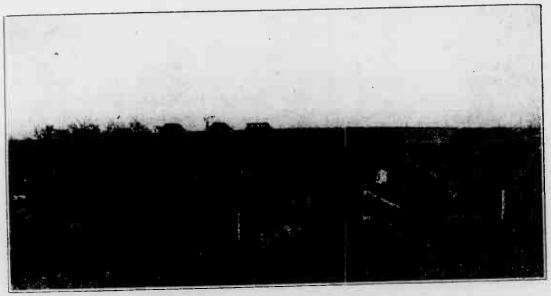

Fig. 24.—A WOLF HUNT ROUND-UP
The wolves have been killed and are now being sold at auction to the highest bidder. The proceeds ordinarily go to the Red Cross or some similar organization.

others can be met only by a greater concerted effort on the part of the farm people and their leaders.

Reading, radio, home games and music, the chautauqua, lyceum, hunting, and the family automobile trip should all be encouraged—so should picnics, celebrations, and good well-selected moving picture shows. Group singing, band and orchestra music, local talent plays, literary societies including debates and talks on current topics, should all be encouraged.

The literary society offers splendid opportunities to both old and young for a general good time and for training thru taking part in the discussions of live problems. The debate is especially valuable to any one for the training it gives him in thinking out the two sides of a question, in weighing the points arising from each side, and in presenting in the most effective manner before an audience the side which he advocates. This training should be of especial value to farmers. They have a very large number of live questions which they must in some way settle for themselves. Why should they not form debating societies and derive pleasure and mutual helpfulness in threshing out their problems? Rural credit and marketing, schools, health, and other matters should be discussed by local speakers and outside talent.

For many of the recreations named above, churches and schoolhouses may be used. Community buildings are being erected for all-the-year use. The chautauqua or fair grounds may be used for certain other forms of recreation.

If town cousins participate in the open-country recreations and amusements, they may get a better understanding of farm problems and a broader class sympathy. Class prejudice and class ignorance bring only bad effects upon all. If those of all classes eat, play, and work together, all will be better off.

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